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Capitol Hill wants Casey's scalp



WILLIAM CASEY
Pressure to resign.

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WASHINGTON — CIA chief William Casey is under increasing pressure to resign because of his role in secret U.S. arms sales to Iran.

Several prominent Republican and Democratic congressmen, including Senate Foreign Relations Committee Chairman Richard Lugar (R-Ind.), have expressed anger at Casey for misleading them about his role in the scandal in initial congressional briefings.

Lugar, considered one of the administration's staunchest supporters in Congress, called on President Reagan to fire Casey and others involved in the Iran arms-for-hostages fiasco.

"The President must make changes in his staff," Lugar said, singling out Casey.

"If they did it as a team and Poindexter went, then Casey should go also," said Rep. Dave McCurdy (D-Okla.), a member of the House Intelligence Committee.

The Reagan administration, in telling the public its version of the Iran dealings, has sought to portray the

Iran operation as the brainchild of a handful of "cowboys" in the National Security Council who carried out the arms sales with only limited CIA involvement.

But sources close to the Justice Dept. and congressional investigation said Casey's involvement was far more extensive than he initially admitted in his Nov. 21 brief-

ings of the House and Senate intelligence panels.

Sources said the CIA was, in fact, heavily involved in most areas of the operation, including:

- The establishment of the Swiss bank account used later to launder money from Iran arms purchases for use by the U.S. backed Nicaraguan rebels.

- The purchase of TOW anti-tank missiles and parts for Hawk anti-aircraft missiles from the Pentagon to send to Iran. The Pentagon was later reimbursed \$12 million after the sales.

- Allowing the White House to use a special CIA air charter service for arms shipments to Iran.

Although Casey has said he was aware of "gossip" about the diversion of profits from Iran sales to the Nicaraguan contras, congressional leaders believe that as CIA director he should have known the facts and halted the operation.

"Either Casey is not telling the truth or he was asleep at the switch," said one congressional source.